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EDITOR R.PALME DUTT

LABOUR MONTHLY

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The Editor
Seventy Years On

George Doughty
Trade Unions and Mr Heath

Eric Heffer MP
The 'Cod War'

Hugh Scanlon
***Labour Monthly* Anniversary**

Labour Policy/John Eaton : Portugal/José Pina
Inflation/Alan Brown : Saudi Arabia/Abu Tameem

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LABOUR MONTHLY

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Notes of the Month

SEVENTY YEARS ON

> **'No form will be final until complete communism has been achieved. We never claimed to know the exact road. But we are inevitably moving towards communism.'**
> LENIN: Report to Moscow Party Workers' Meeting, November 27, 1918. *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 216.

June 18, 1973

Seventy years ago saw the birth of Bolshevism, which has transformed the world during these seventy years. We can be proud and happy that this birth took place in the classic centre of the early origins of the working class movement, in London, where the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, driven out by the police from Brussels, completed its sessions, which ran from July 17 to August 10. 'As a trend of political thought and as a political party,' Lenin wrote in 1920, 'Bolshevism has existed since 1903.'

What the World Was Like in 1903

In 1903, two decades after the death of Marx, the imperialist era had opened, the era of 'dying capitalism', as Lenin termed it. The partition of the world between the rival imperialist powers had in the main reached completion (Britain completed the conquest of Northern Nigeria in 1903), though the lustful eyes of the imperialists still looked with eager calculations for the conquest of the peoples of the declining Turkish empire in the Middle East, or of China, where the joint occupation of Peking in 1900 had brought into their view a prospect of further domination. But the new phase opened with the ferocious drive of the rival imperialist powers, continuing by the law of their being to seek expansion in an already partitioned world of colonial subjection, to redivide the partition; and this driving force of inter-imperialist antagonism found expression in the increasing intensification of the arms race, the building of rival alliances which eventually took shape in the confrontation of the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente, and preparation of the war for the redivision of the world. British capitalism, its gathering weakness and isolation exposed by the costly expansionist adventure of the South African war, was moving from its traditional isolation to enter into the system of imperialist alliances, first with the Anglo-

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Japanese Alliance, then with the Anglo-French Entente in 1903, and later reaching the bargain with Tsarist Russia over the body of Persia, and dividing the prospective spoils of Afghanistan and Tibet, in the Anglo-Russian Pact of 1907, thus completing the Triple Entente in confrontation against the older Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria and Italy. Such was the world of imperialism into which Bolshevism was born, to bring a very different future for the world from all the plans of the imperialists.

Peoples in Movement

In this world of imperialism of 1903, speeding towards the first world war, the peoples were in movement, seeking the path towards their independent aims. In the German elections of 1903 the Social-Democratic Party won 24 per cent of the votes—a portent of the future. In Britain the establishment of the Labour Representation Committee since 1900 reflected the first hesitant, limited, but nevertheless significant step of the alliance of socialist organisations and the trade unions to enter into the field of independent political activity; and in 1903 Arthur Henderson won the constituency of Barnard Castle in Durham for Labour in a three-cornered fight. In the Socialist International the battle was raging between the champions of Marxism and the attempts of the Revisionists, represented by Bernstein, to replace Marxism by supposed 'new thinking' echoing the current fashionable propaganda about the 'new capitalism' having rendered the old Marxist conceptions of capitalism out of date. Alongside the Revisionists the battle developed over the liberal-coalition tactics represented by Millerand. The Marxists, led by Bebel and Liebknecht, won the day in the Amsterdam Congress of the Socialist International in 1904 and outvoted the representatives of Revisionism.

Cross-Currents in Pre-1914 Marxism

But in fact the Marxist majority was not homogeneous. Alongside the consistent representatives of revolutionary Marxism, there were also the so-called 'indiarubber' trends of accommodation which later came to be recognised as the Kautskyan Centre. Among the general body of socialist parties, with their dominant preoccupation for socialist unity in each country, there was little understanding of the principles and policies of the Bolsheviks, with their firm grasp of the revolutionary era opening, and of the consequent necessity for a party of a new type to be capable of establishing the political power of the working class. The Amsterdam Congress of the Second

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International carried a resolution for a single party in each country. On the basis of this resolution the International Socialist Bureau set up an arbitrating commission under Bebel to solve the division between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks in the Russian Party. The Mensheviks accepted the proposal and nominated Kautsky and Klara Zetkin as their representatives. Lenin refused such intervention, declaring that this issue of principle could only be solved by a Party Congress. This attitude met with criticism also from representatives of the left in other parties. Kautsky declared that in this division his sympathies were with the Mensheviks, while Rosa Luxemburg came out against Lenin and the Bolsheviks. Among the general body of Social-Democracy at that time, also among the left, there was no understanding of the principles of Bolshevism, which were eventually to provide the salvation of the international socialist movement in the coming ordeal.

Vanguard of the Future

The distinctive strength of Bolshevism in this pre-1914 era, ever since its formation as an organised political force at the Second Congress in 1903, was the firm grasp of the character of the new era which was opening, and the consequent programme adopted at this Second Congress in 1903, outlining the tasks for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or rule of the working class, at the same time as setting out the manifold forms of immediate current struggle, and defining the constitution of the new type of party required for this era of revolution, capable of combining the most flexible response to different phases of the ceaselessly changing situation with readiness to take decisive action for the conquest of power when the conditions were ripe. Incidentally, the famous Rule 1, defining the obligations of party membership, was not actually adopted at this Second Congress, where Lenin and the supporters of *Iskra* were outvoted by Martov lining up on this issue with the opportunists, and was only carried at the Third Congress in 1905. All these precise formulations of the new type of party required for the era of revolution were far in advance of the stage of conceptions and discussion in the general body of the socialist movement at that time. But the first Russian revolution of 1905 swept forward the thoughts and consciousness of wide numbers of socialists and workers in all countries to the new problems which were opening, and found expression in the keen discussion of the tactics of the political mass strike. At the same time the revolution of 1905 stirred and swept into action the revolt of the peoples sub-

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jected to colonialism, in Persia, Egypt, India, China, so that by 1913 Lenin was able to write his *Backward Europe and Progressive Asia.*

Epoch of Revolution

History was proving the justice of Lenin's conception of the prospect of the revolution, developing in the conditions of the general crisis of capitalism, as an epoch of world transformation, comprising many forms of revolution and liberation struggles in different countries, and extending over a prolonged period of many years:

> The socialist revolution cannot take place in any other form than that of an epoch, uniting the civil war of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in the advanced capitalist countries with a whole series of democratic and revolutionary movements, including movements for national liberation in the undeveloped, backward and oppressed nations. Why is this? Because capitalism develops unevenly.
>
> (Lenin, *On a Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism*, 1916)

And again:

> The transition from capitalism to socialism occupies an entire historical epoch.
>
> (Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution*, 1918)

More comprehensively in his report to the Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party in March 1918, Lenin described the epoch of 'the collapse of capitalism in its entirety and the birth of socialist society' as

> a whole epoch in history, a whole epoch of various kinds of wars, imperialist wars, civil wars inside countries, the intertwining of the two, national wars liberating the nationalities oppressed by the imperialists and by various combinations of imperialist powers that will inevitably enter into various alliances in the epoch of tremendous state-capitalist and military trusts and syndicates. This epoch, the epoch of gigantic cataclysms, of mass decisions forcibly imposed by war, of crises—this epoch has begun and we can see it clearly—it is only the beginning.

The record of these seventy years has shown the truth of Lenin's conception of our epoch.

Marx on Russia as the Vanguard of Revolution

In the outlook of the general body of the socialist and working class movement in the conditions of 1903, Tsarist Russia was seen

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as the bastion of reaction, at the same time as tribute was paid to the brave handful seeking to oppose its barbarous repression, who were regarded as heroes and martyrs. But long before 1917, before the birth of Bolshevism, the piercing gaze of Marx and Engels in the nineteenth century, after the defeat of the revolutionary upsurge in Western Europe in 1848, looking to the future course of the world revolution, predicted the prospect of Russia proving to be the vanguard of revolution in Europe. Already in 1859 Marx was writing to Engels:

> The impulse for the European revolution can scarcely come from anywhere but Russia. In Russia the movement has advanced faster than in all the rest of Europe.
>
> (Marx, letter to Engels, December 13, 1859)

In 1877 Marx wrote to Sorge:

> This time the revolution will begin in the East, hitherto the unbroken bulwark and the reserve army of counter-revolution.
>
> (Marx, letter to Sorge, September 27, 1877)

And in 1882 Marx and Engels wrote in their joint Preface to the Russian edition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*:

> And now Russia! During the revolution of 1848-49 not only the European princes, but the European bourgeois as well, found their only salvation from the proletariat just beginning to awaken, in Russian intervention. The Tsar was proclaimed the chief of European reaction. Today he is a prisoner of war of the revolution, in Gatchina, and Russia forms the vanguard of revolutionary action in Europe.

In 1890 Engels reprinted this passage in his preface to the German edition.

Lenin's Continuation of the Marxist Prediction on Russia

Thus it was no arbitrary claim, but in the full continuation of the tradition of Marxism, that Lenin made when he wrote in *What Is To Be Done* in 1902:

> History has confronted us with an immediate task which is the *most* revolutionary of all the immediate tasks that confront the proletariat of any country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European but also (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction, would make the Russian revolution the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat.

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The record of these seventy years has proved the justice of these predictions of Marx and Lenin.

Victory of Bolshevism and Western Rulers' Blindness

The historical outcome proved the truth of the basic conceptions, diagnosis and plan of action of Bolshevism. But so far from the eyes of the rulers of the West being opened by the event, their blindness to the real issues of our epoch rose to new heights of extravagance. When the era of world revolution predicted by Marxism opened in 1917, and the triumph of the principles and leadership of Lenin and the Bolsheviks was proved by the victory of the Russian socialist revolution in November 1917, and the extension of the revolutionary upsurge spread to the peoples of all the countries in the capitalist world and to all the nations oppressed by colonialism, the plotters of Versailles remained blind to the new social order which was arising. In Russia they saw only ruin, famine and breakdown as the consequence of a régime whose impending downfall they prophesied every other day. In their diplomatic conclaves Russia was excluded. But in their practice they concentrated all their attention and violent action in the vain endeavour to overthrow this new state of the working people, who, for the first time since the Paris Commune, and now with the added experience and strategic and disciplined strength embodied in Bolshevism, had risen and taken power into their hands.

Why the Wars of Intervention Failed

All the governments of the Western powers without exception, including that of the would-be progressive US President Wilson who simultaneously tried the feeler of the Bullitt Mission to Moscow, poured in their armies from every side to join forces with the brigand representatives of the old feudal-military exploiters in a ruthless counter-revolutionary war to crush the new social order. But they failed. With all their overwhelming superiority in arms, equipment, resources, numbers and finance, the Western rulers failed to turn the wheel of history backwards. They failed, not only in face of the indomitable fighting will, resourcefulness, fortitude and disciplined strength of the Soviet workers and peasants, united through the revolutionary leadership of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, fighting for their freedom, for the land they had won, for the wrecked factories from which the exploiters had been driven out. The Western rulers failed also because there was no corresponding will to fight in the conscript interventionist armies they sent; in the expeditionary land

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forces and on the battleships revolts broke out against being sent to break a people's revolution. When the Western rulers in consequence finally found themselves forced to abandon their wars of intervention and sought instead to build a so-called '*cordon sanitaire*' of pliant subservient states armed and financed by the West to constitute a wall of obstruction against contact with the fortress of socialism, this defeat of the wars of intervention represented a combined victory of the Soviet people and of international working class solidarity.

Epic of Socialist Freedom

The rulers of Western imperialism sought to console themselves for their failure to crush the socialist revolution by explaining the survival and tenacity of the new socialist state as due to the slavish tradition of the Russian people, who had never known Western freedom, who had always lived under autocracy, and were now under a new autocracy. Thereby these propagandists of the superiority of Western class society were only revealing their ignorance of the difference between autocracy and socialist freedom. Tsarism was autocracy, buttressed and financed by the West. The Russian people smashed it. Kornilov, invited by Kerensky to subdue militant Petrograd by martial law, sought to reimpose autocracy, amid the plaudits of the Western worshippers of order. The Russian people smashed them. Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenitch, Wrangel, backed by all the resources of the West, sought to reimpose autocracy. The Russian people smashed them all, and built the free Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It was the tremendous release of the heroic and creative energy of a free people on the basis of socialism, for the first time in history, that made possible this victory over intervention. It was the liberating power of socialism that made possible the speed of construction from the wreckage of tsarism, to carry through the building of socialism, to achieve those miracles in war which aroused the breathless admiration of the world, and now to advance to the new miracles in the spheres of science and technology and peaceful construction, alongside the foremost world role in the brotherhood of socialist nations and in the cause of peace.

Inspiration of Bolshevism

Such miracles are not achieved by pulling automatic levers of command. Certainly the Soviet people have had to go through rough passages and ordeals in the course of fulfilling the titanic tasks of their historic record. There are still plenty of problems

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clamouring for solution. But this achievement without parallel in human history has been throughout the proud achievement of a people who had won their freedom on the basis of socialism, and carried forward their advance, animated by the creative energy of a common aim, the aim of building a new civilisation, the aim of communism, of human brotherhood. This was the strength which in the darkest hour, when fascism threatened to enslave mankind, was able to play the decisive role, at the cost of twenty million lives, to save the world. This is the inspiration which has ceaselessly opened and continues to open new vistas of advance for humanity, the inspiration which has carried forward and continues to carry forward the teachings of Marxism in the conditions of our era, the inspiration which has drawn its source from the foundation of Bolshevism, whose seventieth anniversary we honour this year.

Towards a Year of Achievement

And now? On the basis of all that has been achieved a new perspective has opened out for the world. The era and outlook of the cold war is officially regarded on all sides as ended and belonging to the past, even though its more obstinate gladiators are in practice exerting their endeavours more actively than ever to seek to throw a spanner in the works. These cross-currents were shown in the recent meeting of Nato foreign ministers in Copenhagen to concert their line for the European Conference of July 3. The two-faced approach was most conspicuously expressed in the equivocal language of Foreign Secretary Douglas-Home combining formal support of the Conference with warnings against 'illusions of *détente*'. But there is no question where the decisive forces of the European and world situation are moving. The agreement to open the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe in Helsinki on July 3, with the equal participation of the 34 European states, together with the US and Canada, is opening a new perspective for Europe and the world. The Brezhnev-Nixon meeting in Washington in June, following the Brezhnev-Brandt meeting in Bonn in May, has given the signal to the world for the approach to a future of peaceful co-operation of states and governments across the differences of social systems. At the same time the upholding of this principle requires the parallel recognition of the just necessity to overcome the relics of colonialism through the liberation struggles of nations subject to foreign political or economic domination. With the ratification of the Agreement between the two German states, completing the preparations for their recognition as independent

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equal members in the United Nations, and the accompanying development of Franco-Soviet co-operation, Douglas-Home is left with no alternative save to try to mend his fences in relations with the Soviet Union and prepare to build a British Embassy in the capital of the German Democratic Republic.

Britain's Boom-Bust Syndrome

This is the international situation the realities of which the rulers of Britain or those who aspire to rule Britain will have to take into account in reaching the key decisions for policy in the future years. Tory government ministers have been trying to proclaim with the insistence of a religious incantation their firm conviction that Britain has entered on a path of sustained growth and expansion which will continue into the indefinite future. The Stock Exchange does not believe them. Nor does the Treasury. It is not difficult to manipulate the levers to stimulate a short-term boom (if the term 'boom' can be applied to a situation of 576,000 unemployed registered in the official return, the reality being higher). It has been done before, and the same tune has been sung. But this time the run is proving shorter. The accumulation of £4,762 million undistributed profits after tax in 1972; the reckless expansion of the money supply at the end of 1972 and in the beginning of 1973; the record budget deficit of £4,423 million planned for 1973-74; the effective devaluation of the pound by 11 per cent through the 'float'; the all-round raising of prices, taxes and rents; and the temporary burst of desperate consumer spending in the beginning of 1973 in order to endeavour to obtain something under the conditions of the inflationary whirl before the value of the money is gone—all this is a familiar story, presented now under the masquerade of 'counter-inflation'. But the contradictions are this time more glaring. As the former Bank of England Director, Sir Guy Bolton, said: 'A policy of counter-inflation cannot succeed by itself while the government is at the same time creating monetary inflation' (*Times*, June 1). On May 15 the government ministers announced the triumph of the boom. On May 21 the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Barber, had to announce the £600 million cuts programme. The metaphor of 'the rocket' used by the President of the Confederation of British Industries to describe the boom became conspicuously appropriate. On June 12 the unflappable Tory Minister for Trade and Industry, Peter Walker, was proclaiming to his audience of American businessmen the triumph of Britain's soaring economic advance and bright prospects. Fate is unkind. It is always when the Tory orator is reaching his

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lyrical climax that he steps on the banana skin. On June 13 the record trade deficit of £209 million in May was announced. It became obvious to all that a far more basic treatment of Britain's problems is necessary.

Labour's Testing Time

This is the situation which gives such key importance to the present debate on policy in the political labour movement. All the present indications suggest that the mass of the British people would wish to get rid of the Tory government, which has brought such burdens upon them, and to return a Labour government, if they could be confident that the Labour government would represent a real alternative and different future. This is the situation of crucial decision which is at the heart of the present fight between the policies of bipartisanship and the demand of the mass of the active fighters in the political labour movement and in the trade unions for a programme which shall no longer repeat the record of previous Labour governments, accepting the basic capitalist structure and seeking to carry through reforms within the crippling limitations of that structure, but should open the offensive on the key sectors of capitalism, the biggest monopolies, to bring them into public ownership.

Problems of the Left

The left is not a single homogeneous grouping, but draws in a wide range. Communists and non-Communists are associated in co-operation in a common struggle. The removal of the old bans and proscriptions on a number of organisations is a valuable step forward, which needs to be succeeded by the key step of recognising the rights of trade unions to send to the organs of the political labour movement and the Labour Party Conference delegates whom they have freely chosen as representing them. There is the wide range of those recognising Marxism. Alongside them are those with a different political conception, but supporting common progressive aims. Consequently there are still many questions of policy and problems of formulation to clarify. But the vital issue of the whole future of the democratic decision of the policies of the political labour movement has been brought into question by the declaration, with reference to the demand of representatives of the active workers in the trade unions and political labour movement for bringing the key sectors of capitalism into public ownership, that the parliamentary representatives and the Shadow Cabinet will

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have the right to veto any such decisions by the elected organs of the political labour movement. The basic question which has thus been raised involves the whole future of the political labour movement. The *Green Paper* seeks to glide gracefully between the issues, with a combination of good intentions, ambiguities and lack of commitment. But in the coming months up to the Trades Union Congress in September and the Labour Party Conference in October these issues will need to be thrashed out in every organisation of the working class; for in the present political situation there is no doubt that the decisive hour of choice for the future of Britain has opened.

R.P.D.

CORRECTION

In the May issue, page 203, the date 1880 should be 1882; similarly in the reproduction of the same passage in the June issue, page 243.

LABOUR MONTHLY FIFTY YEARS AGO

The disorders at the end of May in the Ruhr can have been unexpected only by those who did not see from the first what was going on behind the scenes. It will no doubt come as a surprise to those in the British Labour Party who have not yet cast off their Liberal skins that the resistance to the invader has been from the first inspired not by a mystic nationalism, uniting all classes against a militarism which is a monopoly only of France, but by a complex series of motives, often conflicting, in the different sections of the Ruhr population. . . . The new phase in the Ruhr struggle has brought the reformist Labour leaders in Germany up against the hard facts of the class war. For the first time since the French occupation there is abundant evidence that the Ruhr workers, without perhaps understanding the true significance of what they are doing, have thrown down the glove not only against the French militarists and the Comité des Forges, but also against the Cuno government and the 'Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie'. The 'united front against the French militarists' has been shown to be a myth.

(From 'A New Phase in the Ruhr Struggle',
by M. Philips Price, *Labour Monthly*, July 1923)

We are always grateful for old copies of *Labour Monthly* sent by readers to our office to add to existing stocks. Particularly wanted are copies for 1921-1941, and we are also glad to receive those for December 1942, all 1943, February and October 1944, July, August and October 1945, all 1946-48, July 1949, April 1950 and June 1973! Please send to: *LM*, 134 Ballards Lane, London, N3 2PD.

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TRADE UNIONS AND MR HEATH

George Doughty*
General Secretary
Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers
(Technical and Supervisory Section)

THE central question of which way the trade union movement will go is not a problem which only vexes us. It is the Conservative government's nightmare. The General Council of the TUC may appear to lack confidence in its own potential strength, but the Tory government does not underestimate the fighting capacity of British trade unionism. After the defeats administered by the miners, the railwaymen and the dockers, after the mauling given to the Industrial Relations Act, Heath is under no illusions. He knows that he cannot defeat a united trade union movement—he knows that his incomes policy will not last if the TUC says 'No', and means it.

He also knows that the so-called 'acquiescence' is transitory. At the introduction of his incomes policy, large sections of industry had already settled claims, and others had just experienced massive struggles. It did not need a clairvoyant to anticipate an early, brief, but easy passage for the so-called Counter-Inflationary Act.

Although divine impatience demands immediate ideological struggle against unjust laws, we must not be surprised that British workers pursued their traditional pragmatic path. This means that, despite the need to anticipate economic blows as a result of government political measures, a continuing uncertainty of purpose prevents early counter-measures and mobilisation. Too often, the struggle only takes place against the results of reactionary policies rather than the cause—the policies themselves.

While this feature of our movement may be disappointing when rapid response is needed, it has the virtue of being determined in its pragmatic opposition to interference when vital interests are openly threatened. (For example, leading dockers complained of lack of interest in the many docks meetings called to oppose the Industrial Relations Act, but when the law forbade picketing in defence of jobs, then the law was faced, broken and permanently disabled.)

The instinct for defence and for the preservation of civil and trade union rights runs deep throughout the movement. When the

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cost of living rises become insupportable, the revolt will come in section after section, factory after factory, union after union. The struggle will take place and Heath, the architect of the wage control legislation, and the instigator of rocketing prices, knows it.

The only way in which he can live through the rough periods which lie ahead for him is to reach accommodation with the trade union movement. The arrogant apostle of *laissez-faire* capitalism, bruised after brushes with trade unionism, from UCS to the Pentonville Five, has not only become a state interventionist, but will press with renewed vigour for the trade unions to reach an accommodation with him.

He knows that he cannot meet the movement head-on without committing political suicide. He therefore wants to treat with it. Having lost the fight to reimpose employer dictatorship through the Industrial Relations Act, he now desperately aims for an arrangement with the TUC. The Engineering Employers' Federation, in a secret document, which *Tribune* recently published, described conclusions reached after discussions with Sir John Donaldson, the NIRC judge. That report acknowledged the defeat of the 'managerial' method as practised by the Industrial Relations Act. This attempt to shift the balance of power to the employers was now replaced by the 'governmental' method which would involve the government, the CBI and the TUC in a triumvirate to regulate wages.

This move, applauded by the employers as an alternative to the dismal failures of the Industrial Relations Act, needs the agreement of the TUC. It is a formula born of government weakness, not of success.

If workers are capable of fighting back instinctively against economic pressures, and employers are relying on a weak government to save them, the role of trade union leadership becomes all-important. A confident, aggressive leadership can co-ordinate the blows which will be struck anyway in defence of living standards. A united, well-led trade union movement can sweep away anti-working class legislation. A divided movement can be taken on, piecemeal, and defeated as others have been before.

On the other hand, the government, without TUC and trade union co-operation, cannot carry out its policies. This is the reason for Heath's enthusiasm for talks with TUC leaders. Each round of discussions makes total opposition to wage control more difficult to attain. Each hint of possible agreement pares down the demands of the movement. Each breakdown gives the Tories more reason to point the finger at the unions. Trade unionism is always to blame.

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The whole edifice of government policy sits on the foundations of 'wage inflation'.

Yet the TUC document, *Economic Policy and Collective Bargaining in 1973*, provides all the evidence to prove the opposite. That evidence should be enough to destroy the bipartisan policy which Heath is busily selling to the TUC.

Talks on common policy are impossible without moving us away from democratically decided policies. Any trade unionist should know that talks can only be successful in the context of action. Defined objectives are necessary in any negotiation. If the aims of the protagonists remain diametrically opposed and fundamentally contradictory, then how can discussions produce results acceptable to the trade unionists who expect their voice to be heard? How does one negotiate about the right to negotiate? How much freedom to bargain can be bargained away? How can we agree to restrain wage demands if we do not believe wages to be an important factor in creating inflation?

Too often, the General Council gives an overall impression of immobile neutrality. It then suggests that participation is better than its own unsuccessful inaction. The unwillingness to take a fighting position quickly degenerates into desertions by those who continue publicly to attack Congress policies. Thus their excuses that 'we can't win in a straight battle' infect others.

The alternative is not between academic opposition, which avoids mobilising the strength of the movement, and collaboration. On the contrary we should press for the blame for inflation to be placed where it belongs—on the employers, the speculators, the money-lenders, the giant multi-national companies and the government, which gives them free rein and permanent licence.

To do this the TUC must carry out the decisions of the Special Congress and extend those decisions by campaigning against the Act and its consequences. It should use its great strength to unite all sections and so force a change of government policy and restore free collective bargaining.

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THE 'COD WAR'

Eric S. Heffer MP

THE sending in of British frigates to 'protect' British trawlers led to predictable results. A skirmish took place and the British trawler *Everton* was shelled. Mr Olafur Johannesson, the Icelandic Prime Minister, made it absolutely clear that similar incidents could well be expected in the future. He said: 'I would like to point out that this is completely in accordance with the policy which I have stated . . . In the future we shall continue to protect our limit with every possible means at our disposal.'

British Tory reaction was as one would expect. Sir Alec Douglas-Home, in a BBC Television interview following the incident, said it was 'a shameful thing' for the Icelandic Prime Minister to talk as he did. Home then got really pompous by saying: 'What he is claiming is that a country has a right to use force on the high seas which are open to everyone.'

Sir Alec, of course, happily forgot the Tory Suez adventure of 1956 which effectively blocked the Suez Canal at that time. When British imperialist interests were 'threatened' by the Egyptians claiming the right to own and run the canal, the British Tories did not shrink from using force. In fact the whole history of British imperialism has been one of using force against other nations and peoples. The hypocrisy of the Tories has to be seen to be believed.

When the government made its statement in the House of Commons, following the breakdown of the talks, there were Tory MPs who at the same time as they demanded frigates to go into the 50-mile waters around Iceland, also demanded British naval vessels to keep out foreign vessels from the British 12-mile fishing limits.

The British government case is that they (the British) are acting in accordance with the interim measures laid down by the International Court of Justice at the Hague. On the surface there appears a strong argument. Agreements were made in 1961 between Britain, West Germany and Iceland which at that stage laid down the 12-mile limit. The agreements were carried in the Icelandic parliament (the Althing) by a narrow margin, and the opposition at the time, now the government, declared the agreement had been made under duress.

In November 1971, the Icelandic Prime Minister, in the Althing, said: 'Another aspect . . . is that the fisheries agreement with Britain and West Germany of 1961 should be terminated. That decision is based on the opinion that these agreements have already attained

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their main objective and these nations have fully benefited by the period of adjustment which they gain in the agreements.'

The Prime Minister agreed that there were no provisions in the agreement for termination, but he felt that no country could accept agreements for all time if they worked against the interests of the country concerned. The Icelanders therefore decided to give adequate notice to the British and the West Germans that they would be terminated, and this they did.

The 'crime' laid at the door of the Icelanders is that they acted arbitrarily: in fact, their claim for a 50-mile fishing limit is modest compared with those of many other countries:

	Extent of territorial limit (miles)
Argentina	200
Brazil	200
Canada	100
Ecuador	200
Guinea	130

There are others, and they all refer to territorial sea limits. With regard to specific fishing limits, the list is as follows:

	Extent of fishing zone (miles)
Cameroon	18
Chile	200
Republic of Korea	20—200
Nicaragua	200
Peru	200
Senegal	18

	Extent of fishing conservation zone (miles)
Ceylon	106
Costa Rica	200
Ghana	100
India	112
Pakistan	112

All these states have established their limits arbitrarily. That is why the United Nations Law of the Sea Conference will be held in 1974 to sort out agreed fishing limits throughout the world. If in fact the Icelanders took their case to the International Court at the Hague, it is more than likely that it would defer judgement until after the United Nations Sea Conference. In the meantime, the fishing would continue off the shores of Iceland with possible disastrous effect on the whole future of Iceland.

Iceland is a small country. Its total population is 208,000. That is one-third of the population of the City of Liverpool. They have one

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basic industry upon which the whole population lives, and that is fishing. If Iceland's fishing were destroyed, then the future of Iceland would be bleak indeed. That is why even the opposition parties in the Icelandic parliament are fully supporting the present government in its struggle. In an article in *Free Labour World*, Bjorn Jonsson, the President of the Icelandic Federation of Labour, said: 'The survival of the Icelandic people is based on fisheries.'

The *Times* understood this, when it said in an editorial on May 22: 'Iceland's dependence on fish is greater than Britain's. The argument that roughly the same number of fishermen is involved is specious, because Britain is in a better position to cushion her men against loss.'

The Icelanders have put forward four points which they claim will protect the marine environment. These are: 1. The preservation of fish stocks through conservation measures; 2. Rational utilisation of the fishing banks off Iceland; 3. Progressive development of the international law of the sea in order to secure a reasonable fishing limit for the coastal states; and 4. The prevention of marine pollution. These are surely aims that all sensible people can support. They are aims not only in the interests of the people of Iceland, but of all other peoples including the British people.

The truth is that, whether the British government likes it or not, in the end the Icelanders are bound to win. The United Nations Sea Conference will eventually agree to something like the 50-mile limit, and Britain will have to agree or act against the decision of the rest of the maritime world.

It has been suggested that the Icelanders wish to remove British trawlers from Icelandic seas altogether. That is not true. In fact, they suggested that British fishermen could catch up to 117,000 tons but the British refuse to go lower than 145,000 tons. However, the danger for Britain is that, if it continues with its hard line, the offer of 117,000 tons will be withdrawn and we could end up with much less. The Fisheries Minister, Mr Ludvik Josefsson, has said: 'I am warning the British that it is not clear that we will hold on to our proposals for much longer.'

Iceland is part of the Nato alliance. She is a reluctant part of the alliance, preferring to be neutral, as her Nordic neighbour, Sweden, is. Again, it is interesting to recall that, during the war years, to protect British interests we occupied the country and set up military bases there. In fact, Iceland is actually part of Nato precisely arising out of the military events of the war years, especially the establishment of a US base on the island.

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The Icelanders, although not happy about being in Nato, have nevertheless been prepared to use Nato machinery for settling disputes between Nato countries. On May 29, the Icelandic government made a formal demand to Nato that, under a 1956 agreement that disputes between member countries which cannot be settled bilaterally should be submitted to the Nato Council, the Council arrange a withdrawal of British warships from the fishing areas of Iceland.

This has involved Dr Luns, the Nato Secretary General. The Nato Council has urged both sides to take 'all such measures which might contribute to a negotiated solution'. It has also requested the Secretary General, Dr Luns, to 'maintain close contact with all the interested parties in order to further a speedy and amicable solution.'

It is the aspect of security that is worrying the Nato powers more than anything else. Some of Nato's leaders believe that Britain, by acting as she is, is in fact endangering the future of the Nato base in the island. That is why in the long run they may put pressure on the British government to seek a solution other than by force.

Let me make it perfectly clear that I am not concerned with the continuation of the Nato base. I take the view that if the Icelandic people wish to see the end of the Nato base that is a matter for them, and they should be supported in their efforts. I, as a socialist, wish to see this small nation live in peace, and have a thriving economy, which in their case is based upon their only real asset—fish.

The attitude of Labour's front bench has been deplorable. They have fully supported the Tory government, and at times some of their statements have been even more belligerent than the government's.

I believe agreement can be reached, and I think the whole labour movement should demand that negotiations be again opened up along the following lines: 1. That British frigates be withdrawn at once; 2. That a compromise should be arrived at on the amount of tonnage that British trawlers can catch; 3. That both sides agree in advance to accept the agreement that will be reached at the forthcoming United Nations Conference on the Sea.

I would also suggest that an urgent meeting of the TUC and the Icelandic Federation of Labour be held and that trade union solidarity should be expressed. The fishing trawler owners are not renowned for their support of good trade union conditions. They are out to make a fast buck. We in the British labour movement, and that includes the trawlermen themselves, should not become the mouthpiece of such reactionary employers. Iceland has a case. It also has a good progressive government. It deserves our support.

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INFLATION FALLACIES

Alan Brown

'UNTIL economic growth can be reconciled with a more moderate rate of inflation,' says Aubrey Jones*, 'the boast that "capitalism works" remains an empty one'—and indicates the seriousness with which today's Tory views modern capitalism's inherent and wasting inflationary disease. He calls it the 'new' (basically post-war) inflation and argues that it comes about because the people, having won their rights in the political sphere, are now asserting themselves in the economic arena. Their added pressures, he asserts, are responsible for inflation, as they refuse to take a back seat in the struggle to divide the 'national cake'. But his thesis is based on sand:

> The writers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were probably on the right track when they described the worker as seeking a 'subsistence' wage or, as Marx would have it, a 'socially necessary wage'. . . . The modern age is one in which progressing technology has made for constantly rising living standards, well above a traditional 'subsistence' level. In this respect the prognoses of both Ricardo and Marx are shown in retrospect to have been wrong.

From this false basis he argues that wage increases outstrip output, and that 'the main cause of persistently rising prices is to be found in rising wage costs per unit of output.'

Marx certainly spoke of subsistence—but not as an *aim* of the working people. Quite the reverse, subsistence was the basic minimum which the capitalist class *had to provide* for the working class at any given moment in time in order that it might subsist—i.e. subsistence was the minimum wage which would still ensure the capitalist class a current and future supply of workers. The working class would then, as now, fight for a wage level as far above subsistence as possible. But the point that Marx made was that the labourer was impoverished 'be his payment high or low', that there was 'an accumulation of misery corresponding with accumulation of capital'. Marx declared that the law of capitalist accumulation:

> in reality merely states that the very nature of accumulation excludes every diminution in the degree of exploitation of labour, and every rise in the price of labour, which could seriously imperil the continual reproduction, on an ever enlarging scale, of the capitalistic relation.
>
> (*Capital*, Vol. 1, Ch. 25, Section i)

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* *The New Inflation: The Politics of Prices and Incomes*, Aubrey Jones. *Penguin*, 228pp, 40p.

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And that, not Aubrey Jones's imagined theory, illustrates the history of capitalism. It is a question of exploitation, alongside the continual growth of capital. And what has to be grasped is that the workers, in fighting for higher wages, are merely attempting to reduce the amount of surplus value extracted from them, and thereby to reduce profits. And the fact that the ruling class responds in part by resorting to the printing press and manufacturing inflation, as one way of eroding any gains won by the working class, cannot be turned into a case for saying that higher pay creates inflation.

But *The New Inflation* is not by any means a book simply designed to propagate ruling class theories. It has a very practical aim, as befits the past chairman of the Prices and Incomes Board. For Mr Jones wants very much to be able to claim once more that capitalism *does* work, and for this purpose he wants right-wing social democracy to come yet again to its aid. To the bipartisanship on German rearmament, anti-Sovietism, the arms bill, the Common Market and other issues which have helped save British capitalism in recent decades, Mr Jones now wants to add the whole field of 'prices and incomes policy'.

Arguing that each new government 'spends the first two years of its tenure in seeking to master the inflation generated by its predecessor and the next two years in generating its own,' he wants a Tory-Labour agreement which would allow each side to spend its full five years in office applying an 'incomes policy' free from any inter-party criticism. Thus there would be continuity in government and 'restraint in opposition', He explains:

> Just as there are limits to which an industrial claimant can push his case, so also are there limits to which a political party can push its policies. A political party which presses its point too far can loosen the cohesiveness of society and so impair its ability to govern.

And the only element that this singular glimpse of the frailty of modern capitalist thinking leaves out of account is that the labour movement is composed of a little more than the front bench of the Labour Party in parliament. Dearly as some of them would love to include wages policies among the biparty, 'non-political' issues, there is a little matter of the composition of the Labour Party itself, the trade union movement from which it draws its funds and its sustenance, and the influence of the Communist Party and left-wing fighters for advances in pay and conditions and against deals of any kind with the Tories. Let us not say, however, that we have not been warned.

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LABOUR MONTHLY ANNIVERSARY SPEECH

Hugh Scanlon

(*We print here the speech made by Hugh Scanlon at the National Film Theatre on Sunday, June 10, 1973, at the première of 'Fifty Fighting Years', the film of* Labour Monthly. *The capacity audience of over 500 included Stanley Forman, who co-directed the film, and Alan Bush, who arranged the music. The Editor and Associate Editor, introduced by Hugh Scanlon, also addressed the audience.* Ed. *LM*)

LABOUR MONTHLY occupies a special position amongst all the journals of the labour movement in this country. I am sure that this gathering is well aware of its invaluable contribution, for over half a century, to the working class movement. It has acted as a compass for activists who needed to disentangle the complexities of capitalist society and provide a way forward for our movement. It has cut, with a fine edge, through all the empty bombast and posturing of our so-called 'statesmen'.

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Since its inception, two people are clearly identified with its progress. I am honoured to introduce R. Page Arnot and R. Palme Dutt, who founded the journal and steered it through many storms and crises in the labour movement and in society at large. *Labour Monthly* is, above all, the achievement of these two comrades, who were guided by a clear perspective throughout all the vicissitudes of this period, and by an unshakeable confidence in the working class and its ability to change society.

Through this journal, generations of active trade unionists have had their first introduction to socialist theory and the Marxist interpretation of current events. That is the measure of *Labour Monthly*'s achievement. It has constantly displayed a healthy optimism concerning the future of organised labour, even in the blackest periods, such as when fascism conquered in country after country, and in the virulent cold war period of the 1950s. It espoused the struggle of the colonial people for national liberation and independence long before it was 'fashionable' to do so in other quarters.

Labour Monthly was founded in the conviction that the twentieth century was to see the rise of a socialist world order. This vision was the direct heritage of the Russian revolution. Despite cruel set-backs, despite the tenacious stranglehold of imperialism, a pattern is beginning to emerge on a world scale which justifies this optimism. The main citadels of capitalism remain—but in countries such as Britain, the working class has never been better organised, and we can express a cautious confidence as to the outcome in the Western world.

But in such struggles, the labour movement needs theory—socialist theory. *Labour Monthly* is unique in the English-speaking world in providing such a consistent service in this regard. Palme Dutt's 'Notes of the Month' are always an outstanding example of how theory is used to interpret developments both in Britain and internationally.

It is also unique in its policy of combining a clear editorial line with the broadest possible base for discussion as to the road that the movement should follow. This free and open exchange of ideas is the surest possible basis for effective left unity and, here again, we have great cause to be grateful to *Labour Monthly*. The use of the journal as a forum for debate is an outstanding feature of the journal. It is one of its finest traditions, and long may it remain so!

Labour Monthly has also been an organiser. I well remember attending the great People's Convention in 1940, which was called to

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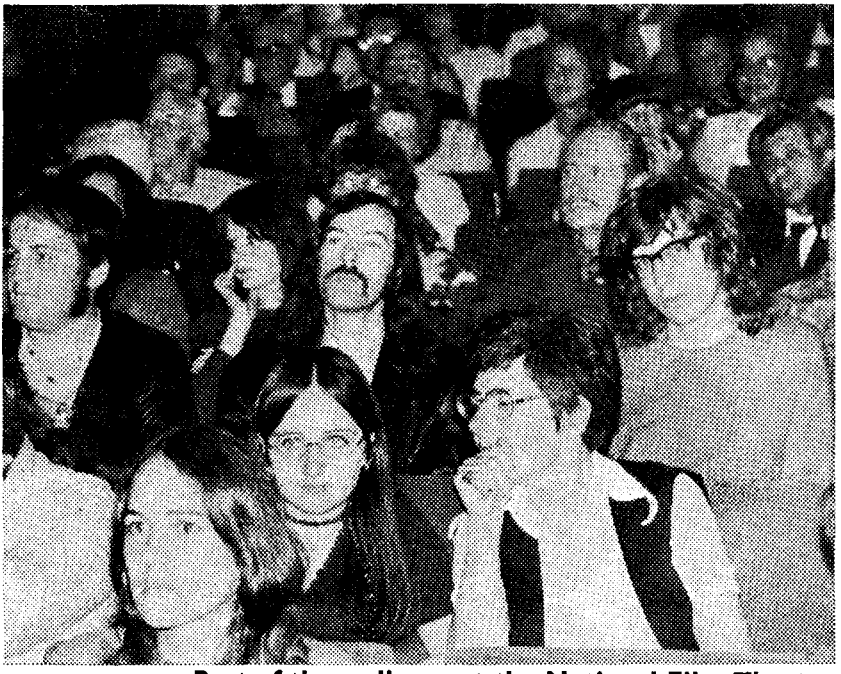
prepare the greatest possible co-operation of labour and democratic forces in the early days of the second world war. This was but the culminating point in a whole series of conferences that *Labour Monthly* helped to organise throughout the 1930s, warning of the dangers of fascism and war.

The struggle for peace, so intimately bound up with the fight for democratic rights and socialism, has deservedly been a central preoccupation of the editors. This has continued in the post-war period, when the acute dangers to world peace posed by the Western military blocs, under US domination, were carefully outlined.

Labour Monthly was founded at an appropriate time. In 1921, when it was born, the great industrial struggles, culminating in the 1926 general strike, were being unleashed. The 1970s promise to be just as stormy and momentous a period for the working class.

We can feel confident that this journal will continue to educate and warn the movement in the period that lies ahead, and that the unparalleled experience of the two comrades on the platform, will perform a vital service for the labour movement.

Although this is the Fiftieth Anniversary celebration, we are already two years into the next fifty years. Forward to the centenary!



Part of the audience at the National Film Theatre

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Hugh Scar

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R. Palme Dutt

Pictures by Pat Mantle

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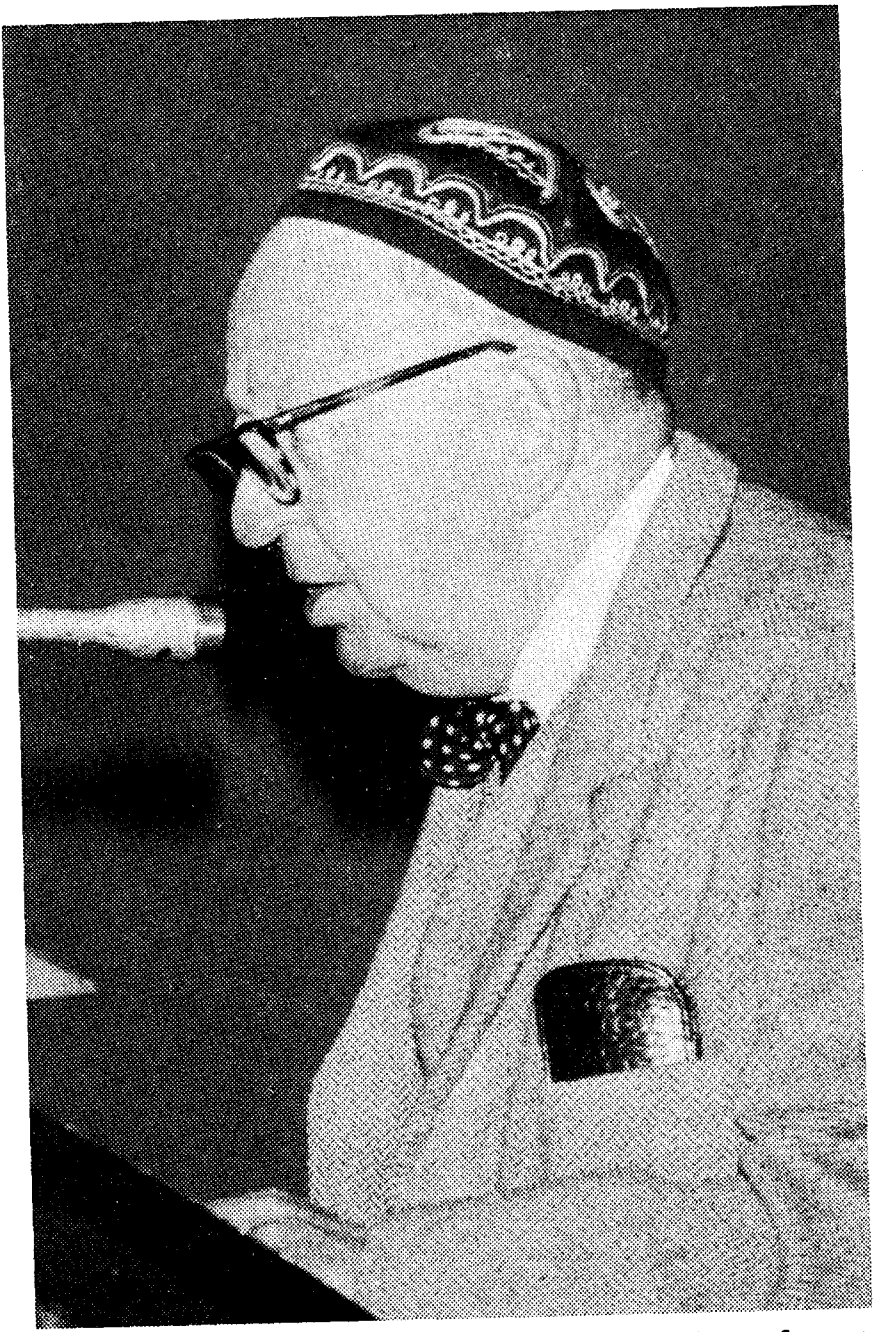

Robin Page Arnot

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PORTUGAL—ADVANCING STRUGGLE

José Pina

*(José Pina's first article, 'Portugal—Repression and Resistance', appeared in our June issue together with other special material on Portugal—*Ed. *LM)*

THE 1926 coup in Portugal abolished all political parties other than the fascist União Nacional (National Union), now re-christened National Popular Action. But this did not prevent the Portuguese Communist Party, working underground, from becoming the leading force and major political influence among the Portuguese workers and all sections of the population. Anarchist groups had some influence among the workers prior to 1934, and the Portuguese Socialist Action, a social-democratic body, has tried in recent years—with backing from the Socialist International and, in Britain, the Labour Party—to enlarge its influence, but with little result: its strength among the workers remains low and its leaders and organisations for the most part function abroad.

The history of working class struggle over the last 46 years is, therefore, very closely linked with the history of the Portuguese Communist Party. The PCP was founded in 1921 and has had to work and organise itself underground since 1927. From 1929 to 1941 the PCP went through a difficult period, facing constant savage and brutal police repression, with torture, murder and detention in concentration camps as the fate of large numbers of its members and leaders. Insurrectional strikes and other workers' actions took place in 1934. The repression which followed led to the murder in 1942 of the first general secretary of the PCP, Bento Gonçalves, a metal workers' leader, in the Tarrafal concentration camp in the African Cape Verde Islands, together with many other Communists and anti-fascists. The PCP newspaper, *Avante* (Forward), first appeared in 1931 and continues to be published in spite of every difficulty, being now the longest-surviving underground political paper the world has known.

From 1941 to 1949 the PCP grew in strength, leading major industrial strikes, particularly between 1942 and 1944, and again in 1947. Joining forces with other sections of the population, the Portuguese workers played a leading part in political campaigns centred round the so-called 'elections' organised by the government

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in 1945 and 1949. In 1949 a public anti-fascist meeting in Oporto brought together one hundred thousand people, one-third of the total population of the city. But from 1949 to 1960 the cold war led to an intensification of fascist repression. Many workers' leaders and militants were arrested, and several were murdered by the secret police. Despite this, many struggles took place, including important resistance by farm workers and fishermen. 'Election' campaigns again drew mass support in 1951 and especially in 1958.

From 1960 to the present day there have been successful advances by the Portuguese working class. In 1961 the anti-colonial insurrection of the Angolan people, followed in 1963 and 1964 by those of the peoples of Guiné and Mozambique, received immediate support with much activity inside Portugal against the colonial wars, including, since 1970, sabotage and armed attacks by underground organisations against military installations.

May Day 1962 in Lisbon saw over one hundred thousand people—more than one-tenth of the capital city's population—demonstrating in the streets and engaging in fierce clashes with police and troops who repeatedly fired into the crowds. The demonstrators came back on to the streets one week later in their thousands. In that same month of May 1962 over two hundred thousand farm workers, involved in widespread strikes, won an eight-hour day.

In 1968 the ageing and failing dictator, Salazar, was withdrawn from office by the fascists and their foreign backers who replaced him by his old collaborator and 'modern fascist', Caetano. This was followed by the largest ever wave of industrial strikes, involving over one hundred thousand workers. Important wage increases were won, and leading positions were gained in the *sindicatos*, the official trade unions.

The main political task ahead is to overthrow the fascist régime by means of united insurrectional action, with all sections of the people winning democratic liberties which will pave the way to the building of a socialist Portugal. Major immediate tasks are the united struggle for better wages and conditions, against the wage freeze, against the rising cost of living and unemployment, against the exploitation of the country by foreign imperialist interests—including the Common Market—and against government repression. A most important immediate task is to end the criminal colonial wars against the peoples of Angola, Mozambique and Guiné, which also place a tremendous burden on the whole Portuguese people and on the working class in particular.

Recent actions along these lines include the great demonstration

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organised in Oporto by the PCP in April last year against rising prices, when forty thousand people, one-tenth of the city's population, demonstrated in the streets, The occupation by the workers, earlier this year, of factories threatened by closure, was followed by a spate of large and small strikes, stoppages, go-slows, wage demands, mass meetings, signed protests and other forms of working class action. The struggle in the workers' *sindicatos* continues to progress, and many leaders trusted by the workers have been elected, despite the bans and illegal interference by the authorities. Meetings of one to four thousand workers in the *sindicatos* are not uncommon.

All these actions take place against a background of police repression, which has now gone back to some of the worst excesses of the Salazar era, after the failure of Caetano's 'liberalisation' of the régime. Arrests, systematic torturing of prisoners and harsh prison conditions are commonplace. Elected leaders of the *sindicatos* are put in jail simply because they oppose the régime, as happened to several in 1971. Workers' leaders Dias Lourenço, Antonio Gervasio and José Magro have been kept for years and years in the fascist jails. The present members of the underground Central Committee of the PCP have spent a total of 250 years in jail.

The Portuguese workers have to depend on underground organisation—with all the consequent risks and tremendous hardship—as the only way in which they can act politically, because of the total lack of democratic liberties. Their main strength lies, naturally, in the industrial areas and the factories. Here unity committees are formed, at shop-floor level, of workers with different political leanings. The actions of these committees run in parallel with actions in the *sindicatos*, where these can be used as a weapon against the employers, overcoming leftist suggestions that illegal trade unions should be organised in place of this work which is showing such useful results.

The struggles of the Portuguese workers have a strong link with the actions of trade unionists in Britain, who face a common enemy, the same British monopolies and business interests who support the Portuguese régime. Workers in Britain can effectively oppose British investment in Portugal—which only strengthens the grip of the big monopolies against demands for better wages and conditions in Britain. They can help too by opposing the political, diplomatic and military aid that has for years been given by British governments to the Portuguese régime, by demanding an end to a shameful 'alliance' between the two countries, and by expressing to 'Premier' Caetano, when he visits Britain on July 16, all the contempt and hatred they have always shown for fascism anywhere in the world.

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SAUDI ARABIA— WORKERS IN ACTION

Rashad Abu Tameem
Secretary
Committee for Solidarity with the Saudi People

THE working class in Saudi Arabia is relatively young. The discovery of oil and its extraction came late in the thirties, and oil and the rapidly growing building and construction industry form the mainstay of the Saudi economy.

Early in its history, the working class was in the lead in struggles for democracy and in opposition to backward and unpopular measures brought in by the Saudi government. In the process, the Saudi workers paid with their lives as the price of upholding the right to, and need for, a democratic and forward-looking society.

The struggle was, at the start, confined to immediate demands: better working conditions, higher wages and limitation of working hours. The government has consistently answered with oppression, by opening more prisons, detention centres and interrogation cellars, and by extending its security apparatus and hiring 'experts' from the West to train its jailmen.

The first time a strike took place was in 1948 in the Al-Thahran region: petroleum workers demanded increased wages and an eight-hour day. The strike lasted for ten days. It was not organised by any committee or organisation, and this helped the authorities to break it, with the aid of US experts. The lesson, however, was not lost on the workers. Soon they were setting up the first trade union committees. The authorities' refusal to recognise them led to the second strike in the same area in 1953.

On this occasion the workers put foremost their demand for full trade union rights. The elected Workers' Committee was empowered to negotiate for an end to summary dismissal of workers—a policy the companies resorted to upon the election of representatives. After a period of time spent in negotiation, the government and the US companies decided to put the workers to the test. Rumours were circulated regarding members of the Committee: 'religious infidelity', 'communism' and 'subversion' were some of the accusations levelled at them. Soon its members were thrown into the notorious prison of Al-Abeed in the Al-Ihsa region.

In reply, not only the workers in the oil-field took action, but newspaper workers, fishermen and others joined in the first general

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strike affecting the country. The workers faced the barbarous national guards—a bedouin army of mercenaries—as well as US troops and armoured vehicles from the Al-Thahran US Air Force base. The strike lasted for 20 days, and one of its slogans was 'No return till the workers are freed.' The strikers remained faithful to this slogan. They forced the government to release the workers, and to concede a number of demands made earlier by the Committee.

That strike was of singular importance. The strength of the weapon they wielded became obvious to the Saudi workers. It enabled them to retrieve all the confidence they had lost in the earlier action. And it taught them the importance of united action.

Another significant development dates from 1956. Workers at the ARAMCO fields demonstrated during a visit by the King, and demanded the cancellation of the treaty enabling the US to maintain its nuclear airbase at Al-Thahran. This demonstration was not an isolated incident. Indeed large sections of the Saudi population were engaged in canvassing against the treaty and its impending renewal. The bread-and-butter demands became, from that time onwards, only one aspect of the struggle of the Saudi workers.

The régime's reaction was to arrest many hundreds of people, including workers, and to subject them to public flogging. It threw numbers of them into its many prisons. Many have since died, after torture, maltreatment and disease. The National Liberation Front, an organisation which grew from among the workers, retaliated by staging a number of strikes and other forms of industrial action. Ras-Al-Tannourah, Abqeeq and Al-Thahran were the major areas affected.

A widespread strike in the Neutral Zone in 1964 led the régime to panic. Arrests were made of some 20 patriots, and summary sentences were handed out giving them terms of imprisonment ranging from three to 15 years. At the same time, a campaign was begun by the authorities to undermine the workers' demands, claiming, among other things, that the 'ring-leaders' had been arrested and that 'law and order' had been restored. It took a single year for these claims to be shattered. A massive popular movement emerged in 1965 and 1966. Demonstrations took place across the country. Petitions and strikes demanded the release of the prisoners. Women took part in the demonstrations in full force, many of the women's delegations meeting the régime's officials and demanding the release of their men-folk.

The movement has continued to grow in strength. In 1967, following the aggression by the Israeli Zionists against Egypt, Syria and

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Jordan, Saudi workers joined their compatriots in massive demonstrations in the country's major cities. Many of them were arrested, and their release is still the concern of democrats throughout the world. In Britain, the Committee for Solidarity with the Saudi People* has organised protests in support of the Saudi patriots, for the release of the prisoners, for full democratic and trade union rights, and for the freedom of speech and expression denied to the Saudi people by a reactionary régime.

The Saudi government has recently announced its intention to build 31 new prisons. This comes at a time when it has just concluded a deal with the British government. The deal was announced as the largest in British history: it included the purchase of extensive military equipment, but not all its clauses have been made public. Past experience indicates that a large segment of this £256m. deal will go to furnish the new prisons, import 'experts' in interrogation techniques and torture—in addition to existing US, West German and British personnel—and to train and equip its security apparatus in order to intensify the campaign of oppression against the Saudi Arabian workers and people. Support by British trade unionists for the protests organised in Britain is therefore important particularly in that it helps to break through the isolation imposed over the years upon the struggles of people voicing democratic demands in Saudi Arabia.

* Committee for Solidarity with the Saudi people, c/o Liberation, 313-315 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

THE MUNICH DRAMA (10)

I. M. Maisky

(*Czechoslovakia is sold down the river at Munich, and Chamberlain proclaims 'Peace in our time', in Academician Maisky's tenth instalment*—Ed. *LM*)

ON September 29, 1938, that tragic day when the fate of Czechoslovakia was decided at Munich, Halifax invited me to the Foreign Office and made an attempt, if not to justify himself, then to explain why Britain had sat down at this conference without the USSR. Here is his own record:

> We all had to face facts and one of these facts was . . . that the heads of the German government and of the Italian government would not be willing in

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> present circumstances to sit in conference with Soviet representatives. It seemed to us vital, as I believed it would to him [myself—I.M.], that, if war was to be avoided, we must somehow or other get matters on to a basis of negotiation. It was this conclusion that had led the Prime Minister to make his appeal yesterday to Herr Hitler for a conference, to which, if Herr Hitler so desired, others could be invited.
>
> (*Documents on British Foreign Policy*, Third Series, Vol. 2, London, 1949, pp. 623-4)

I did not conceal from Halifax my feelings on what I had heard from him, and in general on Chamberlain's policy. Unfortunately, Halifax 'forgot' to give an account of my reaction in his official record. His explanation exactly conveys the spirit of the Munich conference. Hitler and Mussolini were then on the crest of a wave, while Chamberlain and Daladier were in the doldrums. We saw the state the British Prime Minister was in when he set off for Munich. Daladier was in no better condition. This is how one diplomat who was present at the Munich conference described his mood:

> The French, including Daladier, were resolved to reach agreement at any cost. They were a harried lot of men who showed no sign of shame at being parties to the dismemberment of their ally.
>
> (Ivone Kirkpatrick, *The Inner Circle*, London, 1959, p. 128)

When he wrote this, Ivone Kirkpatrick was First Secretary of the British Embassy in Berlin. The confused state of both Prime Ministers can be seen from the following: they did not even meet to agree on their actions at the conference. Hitler and Mussolini, on the other hand, appeared at Munich after they had held a meeting on the Austrian border.

Hitler decided to wield the big stick again. In Munich he played the role of the tiger unleashed: he stormed, he shouted, he expressed extreme impatience and made no attempt to conceal his contemptuous attitude toward Chamberlain and Daladier. In such an atmosphere neither Premier even risked raising his voice against any of the points in the agreement which were under discussion (if it could be called an agreement at all).

At the conference table everything took place with the speed of machine gun fire: it began at 1 p.m. on September 29 and finished at 2.30 a.m. on September 30, including breaks for breakfast, dinner and other necessary matters. In less than 13 hours the fate of Czechoslovakia was decided, and not only the fate of Czechoslovakia!

Two representatives of the Czechoslovak government, A. Mastny, envoy in Berlin, and Hubert Masaryk, a highly-placed official at

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the Czechoslovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were summoned to Munich on September 29. They were not invited to sit at the conference table; they were only to listen to the sentence—and not even in the name of the entire conference: the Germans and Italians left the room, and only then did Chamberlain and Daladier receive the Czech representatives. What the two Prime Ministers said boiled down to what Ashton-Gwatkin, one of Chamberlain's colleagues, expressed briefly in a talk with Czechoslovak representatives as 'if you do not accept, you will have to settle your affairs with Germany completely on your own. . . .'

The Munich 'sentence', which gave Czechoslovakia into the hands of the aggressor, was delivered by the Czechoslovak delegate to Prague early in the morning, and the Czechoslovak President and Government were confronted with the crucial question: what to do? It was obvious that Britain and France had washed their hands of the matter and that any fight against the Munich *diktat* was possible only with the support of the USSR. For reasons referred to earlier, the Czech leaders did not decide to take this line. The alternative was capitulation. The ruling circles capitulated hurriedly and in disorder, losing their border fortifications, their factories, buildings and stores, their institutions and organisations in the Sudetenland. The Czech population of these areas fled, leaving their possessions behind.

The Czechoslovak bourgeoisie did not have the courage to take action against Germany in alliance with the 'Bolsheviks'. But there were people of another stamp in the country, a striking example of whom was Ludwig Svoboda, now President of Czechoslovakia. At that time he was a battalion commander in the Czechoslovak army. He did not obey the government's order for capitulation to Hitler's aggression, but took his units to Poland and then to the USSR, where he began his fight against the fascists.

At that time Chamberlain was rounding off his shameful action with a hypocritical flourish. On the morning of September 30, without a word to Daladier or any of his closest associates, he asked for an audience with Hitler and requested him to sign an Anglo-German declaration, the essence of which was as follows: We have reached the firm decision that the method of consultation has become the method established for reviewing all other questions which may affect our two countries, and we are fully determined to continue our efforts to eliminate possible sources of disagreement and thus to facilitate the ensurance of peace in Europe.

The Führer raised no objections. Why should he? He had got what

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he wanted and could indulge himself at the expense of giving Chamberlain a spoonful, a very tiny spoonful, of honey. The declaration was signed on the spot. On returning to his hotel, the British Prime Minister, slapping his hand against this side pocket, exclaimed rapturously: 'I've got it!' (*The Inner Circle*, p. 130).

It was this insignificant scrap of paper, which Hitler was to tear to pieces in six months, that Chamberlain displayed grandly to the crowd that met him at London Airport, proclaiming that it guaranteed 'peace in our time'. Daladier did not bring back any such prize, but Bonnet, who did not go to Munich, organised a magnificent welcome for him in Paris. In my diary for September 30 there is the following:

> Yesterday I did not sleep until 4 a.m. but sat by the radio. At 2.45 a.m., at last, it was announced that agreement had been reached at Munich, and that peace in Europe was assured. But what an agreement! And what a peace! Chamberlain and Daladier capitulated in full. The conference of the four in fact accepted the Godesberg ultimatum with minor insignificant changes. The only success for Britain and France was that the Sudetenland would not be transferred to Germany on October 1, but on October 10. What a world-shattering achievement!
>
> I paced the dining-room from end to end for a long time, all the time thinking things over. They were oppressive thoughts. It was difficult to grasp immediately the real significance of what had just happened, although I felt and understood that this night some historic milestone of immense importance had been passed.
>
> With one step quantity had become quality, and the world had immediately changed. . . . In the morning I got up with a heavy head, and the first thing that came into my mind was that I had to go to see Masaryk. When I entered his reception room there was no one there. After a minute I heard hasty footsteps on the stairs and Masaryk came in somehow sideways. There was something strange and unnatural in his tall, powerful figure. It was just as if it had suddenly been turned to ice and had lost its accustomed mobility. Masaryk cast a quick glance at me and began in his normal flat society tone: 'What fine weather we're having today, aren't we?'
>
> 'To hell with the weather,' I involuntarily waved a hand. 'I haven't come to you about that. I have come to express deep sympathy and profound indignation at the shameful behaviour of Britain and France at this exceptionally grievous moment for your people.'
>
> A kind of electric shock seemed to galvanise Mazaryk's tall figure. The ice instantly vanished, and he shook off his immobility. He seemed to sway in the air and suddenly, altogether unexpectedly, fell against my breast, sobbing bitterly. I was overcome and a little embarrassed. Kissing me through his tears, Masaryk muttered: 'They have sold me into slavery to the Germans, as they used to sell the Negroes into slavery to America.'
>
> Gradually Masaryk calmed down and began to apologise for his display of weakness. I shook him warmly by the hand.

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Under the same date I wrote:

> In the middle of the day I was invited to visit Cadogan and was briefly informed of the Munich decisions. . . . Then he began to cross-question me persistently about what I thought of those decisions. I did not beat about the bush but told him quite sharply that I considered Munich a terrible defeat for Britain and France, that on the previous evening an important historic milestone had been passed which marked the beginning of a new epoch in European history, the epoch of German hegemony, and that the result would be a chain of further retreats by the 'Western democracies'.

SUBSTANCE AND SHADOW IN LABOUR'S PROGRAMME

John Eaton

A BIG struggle is beginning to be joined about Labour's future. *Labour's Programme*, the *Green Paper* and other discussion documents pose a number of key issues of which the extension of public ownership is once again of foremost importance. An enlarged and economically more significant sector of publicly-owned industry is the indispensable basis for a social policy capable of meeting the needs and expectations of the people. That such a policy will strengthen the workers and the cause of socialism against the capitalists is evidenced by the alarm of the City and the capitalist press, echoed within the Labour Party by cries from Crosland and others. But the programme itself for all its many good points is full of 'soft' alternatives such as giving the workers slices of 'the equity share cake'—and we'd all do well to remember the old reply to offers of slices of cake: 'It's not a slice of cake we want; it's the bakery.'

The draft Labour programme, the *Green Paper*, contains a remarkable section—3n—neatly headed just Capital, and subheaded Capital Accumulation. Like the programme as a whole it is a sort of battleground: some quite good statements immediately followed by the weakest statements, contradictions of what has already been said and endless qualifications of anything clear, simple and definite. Running throughout it is a refrain that might be paraphrased as 'Rome was not built in a day.' The meaning of this refrain to our Labour friends of capitalism as they contemplate placing their posteriors on some future Cabinet seats—the meaning to them is that they will be entitled to leave over anything in the programme that really cuts into the power of capital, whilst

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they get on with those bits of the programme that do not hurt capitalism. (Hence the panic in high places about a programmatic commitment to take over a quarter of the big boys' companies.)

Socialists in the labour movement have got to fight really tough battles for socialist ideas in the programme and socialist actions at the grass roots in support of these ideas. By way of example, it is worth trying to dissect the important section 3n—for Capital in a capitalist society is important! First it tells us:

> The function of industrial management in most modern companies is wholly separate from ownership. The directors . . . are responsible for all policy decisions—pricing, investment, dividends, etc.—and little shareholder participation is allowed in the process of decision-making.

It then goes on to say that it would be a good thing for the workers to become shareholders! The road to socialism is to be paved with shares in British Capitalism Limited! To portray fairly the mix-up between pro- and anti-capitalist ideas in this document, a fairly long quotation is, I fear, necessary:

> In a political democracy, nationalisation is bound to be a piecemeal process . . . [i.e. Rome was not built in a day]. There is, therefore, a strong *prima facie* case for some new institutional arrangements to counteract the tendency to *automatic* enlargement and enrichment of the *rentier* class. There are a number of ways of doing this: the nationalisation of whole industries or sections of industry; the expansion of a State Holding Company by acquisition of companies or holdings; the diversification of the existing public enterprises. Two other important possibilities are also now under close study by the National Executive Committee. The first is for our proposed National Superannuation Fund to invest any reserve fund it may build up in equity shares; the second is for the state to purchase equity shares on a fairly large scale, offset by the issue of government fixed interest debt. An additional approach, which is now being considered by a Labour Party Study Group, is for a National Workers' Capital Fund to be created. . . . The capital for this body would be derived from companies being required to transfer annually to the central fund, in the form of equity shares, a certain percentage of their wage-bill. . . . This would give the people a valuable direct leverage on the economy in the form of a large and growing capital fund. As yet this scheme is very much in the early stages of consideration. But our Capital Sharing Study Group will be producing a Green Paper for discussion and comment.

In this Brave New Britain Limited, little shareholder participation will be allowed, but the workers will at least be able to say: 'We are all capitalists now.'

Whilst the *Green Paper* is quite right in saying that industry is not run by the mass of shareholders, it is wrong when it asserts

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that 'the function of industrial management is wholly separate from ownership.' The oligarchy of very wealthy, very powerful capitalists, owning key blocks of shares in 'the commanding heights', run the banks and run the management of industry. Ownership of vast wealth is the basis of their power. The capitalist system provides the terrain for the exercise of this power. The mass of smaller shareholders provide a social and political base for the oligarchs of wealth—hangers-on whose fortunes rise and fall with the barons of international finance and the *seigneurs* of the transnational companies. What the workers need is increase in public ownership in order to weaken capitalist control over the commanding heights; they are not interested in joining the ranks of the 'hangers-on of capitalism'.

These shareholding proposals are an invitation to the labour movement to tie the fortunes of labour to those of capital, to make labour the lap-dog of capital. The policy of socialism is the complete opposite of this. *Socialism is the fight against capital*, all along the line. Of course, we have got to live for many years yet with capital and the commodity/money system that pervades the whole world, generating and regenerating the social and economic relations of capital dominating and exploiting labour. But the mission of socialists is to fight against this power of capital all the time in all possible ways, to restrict the territories and the forms in which capitalism functions, to baulk and to hamstring its operations and enforce against the criteria of money-power the criteria of social need and people-power.

We are in a period of transition to socialism on a world scale in which the battle for socialism goes on and on through time everywhere and in numerous forms. One crucial scene of this battle is within the labour movement itself, *for* the ideas and interests of the workers and the people, *against* the ideas and interests of capitalism and the money-ruled system. (Press and City reaction to the recent National Executive Committee 7-6 vote on nationalisation of 25 of the big boys is just one evidence of this battle.)

A few shares in British Capitalism Limited owned by workers will not change the capitalist base. Other measures that can be implemented in ways that are not objectionable to the capitalists will be found here and there in the final programme. When, for example, the *Green Paper* on 'The National Enterprise Board' speaks approvingly of similar agencies abroad, in France and Italy, one cannot but shudder with apprehension; on the other hand, the programme includes some sound points on the need for state-controlled industry and finance to bring unemployed resources into

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use. But such measures cannot conceivably be implemented by bureaucrats giving plodding effect to the letter of blue-prints whilst murdering their spirit, still less by capitalist oligarchs transferred from the board-rooms of private industry. (Did I hear you say Tiny Rowlands, or do you prefer Smallpeice?)

Furthermore, imagine (if you can) a 'good bureaucrat' or 'genuine socialist minister' trying to implement a policy for the people against capital. He could not do a thing unless the mass of the workers and, with them, the wider community militantly asserted its control over the manner in which policies are implemented and over the people who implement them. Good national policies are essential; funds must be available, orders must be placed, materials and consumer goods must be forthcoming. But the national policies must be simple and incisive policies that can be summarised in slogans for which the masses can fight—policies that enable the movement at the base to get on with the use of resources to fulfil promises to the people. Advance must mean using the movement at the base. The pre-existing managers and bureaucracy can have neither the political will nor the political understanding to implement socialist measures.

This gives great importance to the idea of the 'social audit' that is pressed by the Institute for Workers' Control and played some considerable part in the UCS struggle. In each locality the relationship between industry and the community needs to be discussed by the people to determine possibilities and social priorities and to arm the people against the power of capital by building up the power of counter-action based on social consciousness. Common ownership of the means of production is essential, and also, to quote Clause Four (still the centre of the socialist *v* capitalist battle in the labour movement), 'popular administration and control of each industry and service': this is the share that the workers need to claim—more power, more control *against* capital, based upon knowledge and organisation.

Gradual acquisition of worker-owned shareholdings will not change the basis of capitalist power. It is the battle for more nationalisation, more public ownership and more democratic control from the base that is crucial. The enlargement of the public sector must be effected in such a way as to weaken capitalism and increase the power of the workers and the community. Share-ownership by workers whilst effective control remains with the millionaires might create the illusion of social change but it would not alter the underlying reality.

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FREE SPEECH AND THE LAW

F. H. Amphlett Micklewright
Barrister

IT is a curious misunderstanding of the law as understood by many persons that they believe in some absolute right of free speech. So long as he does not incite directly to crime they imagine that the orator can say what he likes on the matter upon which he is speaking. Actually, the law as defined by the ruling class says nothing of the kind. For example, three Catholic Irishmen were arrested over speeches made at Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park, in which they urged their audience to join their organisation and to go over to Northern Ireland to fight against Faulkner and Paisley. After being detained in prison for eight months they were brought up at the Old Bailey. The more serious charges were then dropped and they merely received suspended prison sentences for belonging to a paramilitary organisation. But one of the defending counsel was without any doubt concerning the implications of the trial:

> If this trial does anything it will put to sleep any myths that might have grown up about there being a hallowed tradition of free speech at Speakers' Corner.
>
> (*Sunday Times*, January 21, 1973)

Again, the judge defined very well what is the present position in law:

> One of the most precious liberties we who live in this country have is freedom of speech, but that freedom must be exercised within the generous and wide limits prescribed by our law.
>
> (*Guardian*, January 20, 1973)

In short, freedom of speech means such areas of freedom as the law permits. There is no such thing as an absolute right to freedom of speech within the British constitution. The most that can be argued is that if an utterance is not positively illegal, it is possibly legal.

The evolution of bourgeois democracy over the last century and a half has seen a certain widening in freedom of utterance. It does not matter much what is said so long as the ruling class can keep hold of the purse strings or the terms of employment. A gradual extension of the franchise and a widening right of utterance was of little final importance to the working class in a capitalist society. It

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merely illustrated the concessions which the society was willing to make without any endangering of its basic existence. For example, atheistic utterance was considered illicit in the mid-nineteenth century simply because it undermined the 'altar, hearth and throne' philosophy of contemporary Toryism. Nobody troubled much about it when a toughening industrial capitalism found it less and less necessary to pay tribute to the church as an established institution. The Victorians of the same period held strict views of obscenity questions and sought to tighten up the law in this direction. It was the suburban members of the newly-constituted London County Council who forced through by-laws which might destroy the London of *Fanny by Gaslight*. But as the tightly-knit class of small individualist middle class businessmen was disintegrated before monopoly capitalism, the narrow outlook of this class is no longer allowed to stand in the way of the ruling permissiveness. Questions concerning freedom of speech are essentially matters bound up with the class struggle, and no ruling class is going to allow the freedom to progress beyond the point at which it finds the speech to have become an embarrassment or a danger. The law in England at the moment is merely to allow freedom of speech save in areas where the state has forbidden the freedom. It rests with the state to decide how much freedom the ordinary wage-earner shall enjoy in the matter.

The common law arose out of a feudal background with the result that blasphemy, obscenity and sedition are still offences at common law. In each case, a breach of the common law entails an attack upon some established bastion of the ruling class. It is only possible to blaspheme against the doctrines, rites and beliefs of the established church. As the judge said as long ago as 1838 in *R v Gathercole*, the offence is caused by an attack upon the established institution. It is not a religious but a constitutional matter. Obscenity involved an attack upon the established *mores* of the society and, as in the case of marriage, might undercut the property rights which such *mores* represented. Sedition means an attack upon constitutional institutions by unconstitutional means and is an offence which must always be guarded against at times of anger and strife, as in South Wales between the wars. Defamation, slander and libel, are nowadays matters for the civil courts but they raise questions of punitive damages. Recourse to the law upon this point is restricted to the rich man or to somebody subsidised, for there is no free legal aid in the matter. As Mr Justice Darling once said: 'The courts are open to every man. But so is the Ritz Hotel!' The wealthy and well-established defamer can usually get away with it if he picks his victim with care.

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Again, the Official Secrets Act and the Race Relations Act alike involve limitations of speech. It is not without interest that, whereas the latter is cumbersome and is too often difficult to apply in a criminal sense, the former carries heavy penalties and can be used for matters lying far outside the scope of espionage. Once again, the capitalist state is in danger if its secrets are exposed, and it is the capitalist state which the ruling class will wish to protect at all costs.

There is of course a certain amount of case law in the matter of freedom of speech. So long ago as 1882, it was decided by the Queen's Bench Division in *Beatty v Gillbanks* that a speaker whose utterances are lawful and who is going about his lawful occasions should receive the protection of the police. If others object to what he is saying and seek to break up his meeting, it is the business of the police to proceed against the aggressors, a point which received statutory sanction under the Public Meetings Act, 1908. This legal ruling was relied upon by George Wise, a Liverpool Protestant lecturer. Wise held open-air meetings at which he advocated Protestantism, a perfectly legal thing to do. But he argued his case in a manner extremely insulting to Roman Catholics, in a district where members of this faith largely predominated, and savage riots ensued. In a High Court ruling in the case of *Dunning v Wise* (1904), it was decided that a speaker could only claim the protection of the law if he behaved in a normally peaceable manner. The same ruling was given in *Burgoyne v Jordan* (1963), a case arising out of strongly pro-Nazi speeches made at a Trafalgar Square rally. The court there held that the speaker must take into consideration the type of audience which may have assembled. For example, if a speaker made a strongly left-wing speech somewhat aggressively to an audience into which fascist thugs had infiltrated and the thugs started to become violent, the speaker might be held responsible for any trouble which followed. It was this type of approach which sometimes caused the police to support Blackshirts against Communists at left-wing meetings almost forty years ago. Again, the case of *Duncan v Jones* (1936) is still binding. A speaker is responsible for all that follows from his speech. He is responsible if the speech causes a disturbance out of sight and earshot of the platform speaker. The police may order him to cease from speaking at the particular spot if trouble of this kind is likely to follow, however legal his words may be. If he persists in claiming a right to freedom of speech, he can then be charged with obstructing the police in the execution of their duty. It is also worth recalling that a magistrate, acting under the Justices of the Peace Act, 1361, may bind a defendant over to keep the peace in the light of what

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may happen. If the person refuses to be bound over, he can be committed to prison for the relevant period, whilst, if he consents, he would find his intended activity severely restricted. In 1931, Tom Mann and Llewellyn Jones were imprisoned for three months in South Wales for refusing to be bound over not to make the speeches they had intended to make at a perfectly legal left-wing meeting. Thus, under capitalist law, there are circumstances where a defendant can be imprisoned for what he might do, and not for any sort of crime which he may have already committed. Again, speech may be used in such a way as to commit the crime of public mischief. When, in 1936, a particularly nasty type of anti-Semite, Arnold Lease, circulated a paper in East London accusing Jews of kidnapping Christian children and using them for ritual sacrifice, he was convicted and sentenced to six months' imprisonment for committing the crime of public mischief. But the offensive material has to be of an extremely strong type which is directly liable to cause a breach of the peace. A blatant and vulgar piece of anti-Semitism published in an obscure north country local paper in 1947 proved insufficient to convict the editor of public mischief. At the trial, Mr Justice Birkett made comments not unlike those already quoted from a judge in 1973, and the jury acquitted.

The ruling class has allowed a flexible constitution to evolve. It has found it more convenient to permit such freedom as will create the illusion that there is complete freedom of speech and opinion wherever their constitution rules. It is too often forgotten that it is to be 'exercised within the wide and generous limits of our law', as the judge said in the trial of the Irishmen. Moments of crisis, such as the war years, illustrate the fact that the government of the day can take powers to limit all freedom so far as it may think necessary. For example, during the second world war there were punitive laws concerning careless talk and talk calculated to create alarm and despondency. If the class war intensifies and circumstances then demand some such step by the ruling class, there is absolutely no reason why some regulations of this type should not be imposed in time of peace abroad but industrial unrest at home. Freedom of speech is relative to social situations and the lack of any absoluteness in the subject makes its value depend very much upon the type of government which is involved. Indeed, a very good example was provided some years ago by the Church of England, a highly establishmentarian body. No attempt was made to restrict the speech of clergy who made half-hearted defences of Hitler even though some occupied distinguished ecclesiastical positions.

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The law concerning public utterances is of the greatest importance to the left-wing generally. Free speech so far as it is considered lawful by the ruling class will only extend to a point where neither the class nor its institutions are imperilled. Once this point is reached, the speaker will find himself challenged by laws concerning sedition, by the threat of an action for defamation, or by criminal charges of incitement. He will soon find that his use of freedom did not fall within the law. As counsel rightly pointed out in the Irish trial, the idea that there is some special freedom attaching itself to Speakers' Corner or similar sites is a pure myth. From this point of view, the freedom achieved by bourgeois liberalism is of very little use in the more advanced stages of the class struggle. Any sway towards totalitarian ideologies on the part of the ruling class will involve almost inevitably a restriction upon freedom in the publication of opinion, although in countries where the ruling class control the mass media in practice, it may not prove necessary to do this in an over-blatant manner. But, as was shown during the war by the governmental suppression of the *Daily Worker* and the *Week*, the danger of forcible suppression is an ever-ready weapon to use in the interests of limitation should it be considered desirable. On the other hand, it is the task of the left-wing movement to fight the issues of limitations upon speech or opinion whenever they arise, and to challenge the ruling class with every weapon which the courts of law can provide. Freedom of speech is a necessary element in a society where open political discussion can take place. No opportunity should be lost to seek to make the law within which it functions as wide as possible and to wrest it as a weapon held in exclusive possession by the friends of reaction. Unless this can be achieved, a deepening crisis within capitalist society could well throw up a situation not unlike Hitler's Germany where speech was free so long as it functioned within the code of the Nuremberg laws!

THEATRE

Tom Barker of Camden—and the World

Unity Theatre, London

UNITY'S LATEST PRODUCTION tells, with music, the story of an Englishman, who became a union organiser, in and out of prison, in New Zealand and Australia, Chile and Argentina, for the 'Industrial Workers of the World'. Meeting Lenin in 1921, he became involved in the industrialisation of western Siberia, and then went to the United States to recruit technical volunteers. In his later years he became Labour mayor of St Pancras. He told part of this story, himself, in the *Labour Monthly* for April 1970.

F.N.

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BOOKS

Rhodesia: The Struggle for a Birthright
Eshmael Mlambo
C. Hurst & Co, 334 pp, £2.95

MOST PEOPLE must by now be aware that for at least six months guerrilla activity in Rhodesia conducted by African nationalists has been making an unprecedented impact. It is obvious why Africans have been forced to pursue their struggle for freedom. But until recently, if anybody wanted to know and understand the situation which has given rise to this armed conflict, there was no really well-researched book by a Rhodesian African that could meet the need.

Eshmael Mlambo has met this need. His book is full of statistics, historical detail, and illuminating little flashes of personal observation and knowledge which only a man born and brought up there could provide. He deflates, often with dry humour, many of the vaunted claims of successive white régimes in Rhodesia. And he documents, in a wealth of detail which will sometimes overwhelm the reader who does not already know a fair amount about the country, the modes of discrimination and exploitation which have driven the African majority past the point of peaceful requests for equality to a life-and-death struggle for political power.

The book is full of good things: a new, useful (to those less well-informed) account of the origins of the ZANU split away from ZAPU; the short but important life of ZAPU's forerunner as the spearhead of the liberation movement in the late 1950s, the ANC. Then the initials stood for African National Congress; today they stand for the African National Council, conducting the legal struggle against the Smith-Home settlement proposals and thereby complementing the armed struggle of the guerrillas. (The choice of initials was deliberate, indicating continuity.) There are some handy biographical sketches of leading activists in the movement; there is an interesting round-up of the reactions of social democratic parties in Western Europe to UDI in 1965; there is more information about developments since UDI than can be found in any other book.

Given all this, one can forgive the author's élitist touches, his blind spot about the economic basis of life and class conflict, and patches of bad writing. Proof-reading was not done at all, one suspects. Yet, warts and all, this is a fine and unique book. As the crisis of white supremacy mounts in Rhodesia, and the bankruptcy of Heath's imperialist policies becomes more apparent, it will become more and more indispensable reading.

ALAN BROOKS

For the Socialist Cause
Ernie Pountney
Lawrence & Wishart, 80 pp, 50p

WHEN AN HONOURED VETERAN is able to write with such freshness and vigour in his ninty-second year from his alms-house home his memories of his life of ceaseless devotion and activity in our common cause, every heart will be warmed by this treasure of a little book. All who had the pleasure of knowing Ernie and working with him in one or another of his many fields of activity can testify to the affection and respect he inspired. Lord Cooper, retiring General Secretary of the General and Municipal Workers, pays tribute in a foreword recognising, despite political difference, 'his intellectual honesty, his unflagging zeal for the working class cause and his loyalty to the General and Municipal Workers' Union' over forty years of responsible

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participation in its work. As a fellow-member of the same union for fifty-one years, and a humble participant in that amalgamation which established the present combination in 1923, when I endeavoured in an unsuccessful battle to win a broader democratic character in the constitution which was drawn up, I join in tribute to the work of Ernie and his fellow-militants which is today bearing fruit in the new stirrings of awakening in a union that used to be regarded as a bastion of reaction. Perhaps I am a little prejudiced, for my heart warmed when Ernie wrote to me in sending a copy of his book: 'I'm OK and going strong; *Labour Monthly* still keeps me alive and alert.' Bless him indeed; for of such indomitable fighters is the strength of our movement built.

R.P.D.

Underdevelopment and Development
Edited by Henry Bernstein
Penguin, 384 pp, £1

MANY LEARNED BOOKS have recently appeared on the economic problems of the third world. This is among the latest, consisting of a collection of essays from various authors (or extracts from their books) giving either a general approach or dealing with particular regions of the third world.

When 21 different authors contribute to a book it is not surprising if they express conflicting views. Those dealing with the problem in general are the most disappointing. Some of them are extremely academic, and appear to be blind to the imperialist system of exploitation which is the main obstacle to economic growth in the underdeveloped world.

Among the best essays is one by G. L. Beckford who makes a striking analysis of the scale of exploitation on the plantations in the West Indies and Central America, and the gigantic profits made from them by huge monopolies in Britain and the US. Another is by O. Lange who emphasises that imperialism created an infrastructure 'purely for the needs of colonial exploitation, and not for the development of the productive power of the country.'

As for the rest, it is rather a mixed bag which does not help much to clarify problems for the reader on the basic needs of the countries of the third world.

IDRIS COX

Peace for Vietnam?
Ivor Montagu
British Campaign for Peace in Vietnam, 20 pp, 5p

IVOR MONTAGU indicates part of the answer to the question raised in the title of his pamphlet through a survey of the infamy of the US war, the aims behind it and some of the deceptions practised in carrying it out. Summarising the main terms of the January Agreement, he shows that they are based on the essence of the original 1954 Geneva Agreements and the peace proposals advanced by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the South, which the US conducted its war to prevent coming into effect.

The pamphlet outlines the favourable prospects in the situation and the unfavourable, and the need for the campaign against these latter to be as strong as the campaign that was waged against the war. The pamphlet will be of great service in this campaign. But it is, I think, a weakness that Ivor Montagu does not stress the estimation of the Vietnamese leaders that, despite the difficulties and dangers still facing them, the Peace Agreement represents a tremendous victory for the Vietnamese people.

HILDA VERNON

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PICK OF THE OUTPUT

We have been working recently to bring order to our stocks of *LM* pamphlets, the first of the series being 'Labour Monthly Pamphlet No. 1', *Marxism After Fifty Years*, by one R. Palme Dutt. Originally priced twopence, this now sells at 50p—and we're lucky to be able to offer one copy even at that price. Our file sets have been properly checked and all the pamphlets priced at the current rare-publications level; and this has been done just in time for us to offer a selection together with back copies of the journal for sale wherever 'Fifty Fighting Years', the film of *Labour Monthly* is showing. We hope organisers will contact our office with sale-or-return orders, as these publications are the pick of *LM*'s output in the thirties, forties and fifties.

A reader in Rossendale, Lancs., has just done us a very good turn by sending a great big box full of copies of *LM* going back to 1933. We were specially grateful for those dated April and June 1934, as these fill missing places in a file set we are completing for photographing. The note covering the gift said: 'I looked at *Labour Monthly* for the "badly wanted" copies.' It really is good to see our appeal heeded so minutely, and particularly when the resulting transport problem meant bringing the heavy load over such a distance: many thanks to all who helped.

Our fund figure for May was low and is cause for extra effort to be made in the holiday months by any who have the possibility of collecting on our behalf. The donations received totalled:

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For the Socialist Cause, Ernie Pountney. Lawrence & Wishart, 80 pp, 50p.

A Family of Peoples: the USSR after Fifty Years, edited by Jessica Smith. New World Review, 192 pp, available on order from Collets.

The Slovak Dilemma, Eugen Steiner. Cambridge University Press, 230 pp, £4.40.

Marx and the Orthodox Economists, Pat Sloan. Blackwell, 182 pp, £2.25.

Labour Relations on the Docks, M. Jackson. Saxon House, 146 pp, £3.50.

From Citizen to Refugee—Uganda Asians Come to Britain, Mahmood Mamdani. Frances Pinter. 128 pp, 70p.

Asian Dilemma: A Soviet View and Myrdal's Concept, R. Ulyanovsky and V. Pavlov. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 170 pp, 75p.

Red Rising in Bavaria, Richard Grunberger. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 164 pp, £2.75.

A Portrait of English Racism, Ann Dummett. Penguin, 300 pp, 50p.

Working for Ford, Huw Beynon. Penguin, 336 pp, 90p.

The European Community: A Superpower in the Making, Johan Galtung. Allen & Unwin, 196 pp, £3.75.

My People Shall Live, Leila Khaled. Hodder & Stoughton, 224 pp, £2.50.

Zionism—Its Role in World Politics, Hymen Lumer. International Publishers (Central Books), 154 pp, £1.25.

Studies in the Labour Theory of Value, Ronald L. Meek. Lawrence & Wishart, 332 pp, £4.

Strategy for Revolution, Régis Debray. Penguin, 310 pp, 50p.

The Grundrisse, Karl Marx. Penguin, 898 pp, £1.

Militarism and Anti-Militarism, Karl Liebknecht. Rivers Press, 162 pp, £1.

The Bristol Trades Council 1873-1973, David Large and Robert Whitfield. Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, 36 pp, 30p.

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